

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

UNCLAS PARIS 001322

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

FOR EUR/WE--LARREA AND BALL, EUR/ERA, EUR/RPM,  
EB/TRA--WALKLET AND MATTINGLY, PM/ISO-FLEMING

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [FAIR](#) [PTER](#) [PREL](#)

SUBJECT: FRANCE: AMBASSADOR AND MOT PERBEN DISCUSS US/EU  
OPEN SKIES, TRANSPORTATION SECURITY, AIR NAVIGATION CHARGES

REF: A. SECSTATE 24724 B. PARIS 1111

1. (U) Ambassador Stapleton had breakfast with Minister of Transport, Equipment, Infrastructure and Tourism Dominique Perben February 28. The Minister was accompanied by his Diplomatic Advisor Jacques Beltran and his Counsellor for Aviation Olivier Berthelot. Deputy Chief of Mission Karl Hofmann and Econoff were also present.

2. (SBU) Perben began by describing his recent trip to the U.S., noting some concern about the opposition he detected on Capitol Hill to the proposed U.S./E.U. Open Skies Agreement. He hoped this would not derail the DOT rulemaking process on foreign investment and control of U.S. airlines, and consequently a possible approval for the agreement early this summer. He was personally supportive of the proposal, because he believed it would increase competition, and serve the cause of regional airports such as that of his native Lyon.

3. (SBU) In response to our recent demarche on Air Navigation Service charges (ref A), Perben reaffirmed what Ministry officials had already told us (ref B): that the proposed Eurocontrol regulation would not affect the current French practice of exempting USG flights from charges. On a separate issue, he also noted that he was closely following the certification of the A-380, the next step of which would be evacuation tests in Germany in March.

4. (SBU) Perben noted he believed we enjoyed good cooperation on transportation security. The GOF was working on organizing a meeting to prepare the working group on transportation security suggested by Secretary Mineta in Tokyo. Olivier Berthelot agreed, mentioning the proposed technical agreement on exchanges and cooperation between DGAC and TSA. He hoped that better exchange of information might lead toward "mutual recognition" of the high levels of security in France and the U.S. We noted that French security practices already had a good reputation, but that this did not affect the legal requirements for transportation security established by the USG.

5. (SBU) Finally, Perben reiterated his invitation for Secretary Mineta to visit France this Spring, and promised to

SIPDIS

pass on information about possible dates. He also expressed interest in having someone from DOT come to work in the Ministry, noting that a civil servant from MOT was already working at DOT.

Please visit Paris' Classified Website at:  
<http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/eur/paris/index.cfm>

Stapleton